

Striving for excellence: An explanatory study on determinants of poor University performance of ADA University students

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Abstract. Since ‘academic excellence’ is one of the core values of higher educational institutions, it is imperative that universities strive to understand the reasons behind poor university performance and find the ways of improving it. The purpose of the present study is to explain the reasons that determine poor performance of undergraduate students at ADA University, situated in the capital of Azerbaijan, Baku. The study employed a mixed method of research, the major one of them being qualitative. The revealed extrinsic determinants include traditional teaching methods, secondary and high school education, need for individualized teaching practices, some assessment mechanisms of the University, and the English language. The intrinsic category of determinants, in its turn, includes low effort of undergraduate students of ADA University, lacking learning and study skills, and considering General Education subjects irrelevant. The suggestions of the study are made with reference to both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

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